

State of Louisiana Accepting Comments on Partial Action Plan for Additional Parishes Impacted by Hurricane Isaac

Nov. 27, 2013

BATON ROUGE - The State of Louisiana is accepting public comments on a Partial Action Plan that obligates \$8.7 million of the \$11.4 million set aside for additional impacted parishes that have unmet recovery needs following Hurricane Isaac.

The funds are part of the \$66.4 million in Community Development Block Grant dollars that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development appropriated to Louisiana for recovery from the 2012 storm. On Nov. 4, HUD approved the state's initial Action Plan for overall use of Isaac funds, which also allocates \$32.7 million to St. John the Baptist Parish and \$16.9 million to Plaquemines Parish for their recovery efforts.

Partial Action Plan 1 allocates \$8,726,000 for the following:

- \$5,886,000 for a portion of the statewide cost-share for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds and Transitional Sheltering Assistance received in response to the 2012 storm;
- \$1,740,000 for cost-share to low- to moderate-income households participating in parish Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs in additional impacted parishes; and
- \$1,100,000 toward priority recovery projects for additional impacted parishes.

"HUD allocated funds directly to Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany parishes, and we've allocated 77 percent of the state's funds to St. John the Baptist and Plaquemines parishes for their recovery," said Pat Forbes, executive director of the Louisiana Office of Community Development. "This Partial Action Plan focuses on parishes that were also impacted by Hurricane Isaac, offering what we believe is the most efficient use of these funds to contribute to their ongoing recovery efforts."

FEMA Cost Share

In response to the heavy rain, flooding and power outages associated with Hurricane Isaac, the state provided emergency protective measures necessary to reduce both the immediate threat to life, public health and safety, and also the threat of significant damage to improved public and private property. Additionally, due to the lingering effects of the storm, some citizens were unable to return to their homes for an extended period of time, creating an extended need for sheltering assistance.

Based on the level of damage caused by Hurricane Isaac to Louisiana, FEMA reimburses the state for up to 75 percent of the costs associated with emergency expenses, debris removal and infrastructure repair. The sum of FEMA Public Assistance and Transitional Sheltering Assistance provided in response to the storm currently exceeds \$466 million, thus making the state responsible for \$116.6 million.

This cost, combined with the expenses from responding to hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike and declining revenues in an ongoing national recession, make the burden of this cost share unsustainable. Therefore, the state is obligating \$5.9

million to cover a portion of the 25 percent cost-share associated with federal funds provided to state agencies in response to Hurricane Isaac.

Hazard Mitigation Assistance Cost-Share for LMI Households

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds provided to parishes, then distributed to individuals, also have a 25 percent cost-share, but it is the individual who is responsible for payment. The state is proposing to distribute \$1.74 million to assist low- to moderate-income citizens who qualify for HMGP funds but cannot afford to pay the cost-share. Nearly 60 households across the 21 additional impacted parishes will benefit from this initial allotment; an additional \$2.7 million will be allocated in future action plans.

Priority will be given to those parishes utilizing HMGP funds for home elevations. The parishes identified with Isaac-funded HMGP elevation programs and their preliminary allocations are as follows:

Parish	Estimated No. Served	Estimated Amt. 1st Funding Round
Tangipahoa	15	\$450,000
Livingston	15	\$450,000
Washington	8	\$240,000
Terrebonne	10	\$300,000
All Other Parishes	10	\$300,000
Total	58	\$1,740,000

Parish Recovery Priority Projects

Of the additional impacted parishes, the five with the most damage per household will receive a total of \$1.1 million for Isaac-related recovery projects that are in line with parish priorities. The activities can include, but are not limited to, cost-share for PA-eligible projects or HMGP cost-share for drainage projects or marine debris removal. Proposed distribution by parish, based on damages, is as follows:

- Livingston, \$300,000;
- Tangipahoa, \$300,000;
- Washington, \$200,000;
- St. Bernard, \$150,000; and
- St. James, \$150,000.

Public Comments

The state is accepting public comments on Partial Action Plan 1, which can be found at http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/cdbg/dr/IC_ActionPlans.htm.

The formal public comment period for this Partial Action Plan 1 begins today, Nov. 27, 2013 and runs until Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2013, at 5 p.m. After accepting public comments, the state will submit the plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for final federal approval.

Citizens, community leaders and elected officials can access the plans and submit comments online by visiting http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/cdbg/DR/IC_ActionPlans.htm and opening the Isaac Action Plan. A copy of the plan can be requested by calling (225) 219-9600.

Members of the public can submit comments several ways:

- Using the online form at http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/cdbg/DR/IC_ActionPlans.htm;
- Emailing them to ocd@la.gov;
- Mailing them to Disaster Recovery Unit, P.O. Box 94095, 70804-9095, Attn: Janice Lovett; or
- Faxing them to the attention of Janice Lovett at (225) 219-9605.

The Disaster Recovery Unit within the Office of Community Development is dedicated to helping Louisiana's citizens recover from hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike and Isaac. As the state's central point for hurricane recovery, the OCD-DRU manages the most extensive rebuilding effort in American history, working closely with local, state and federal partners to ensure that Louisiana recovers safer, stronger and smarter than before.

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